

HONORING MAJOR DOMINICK
VITALE UPON RECEIVING THE
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2022

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend Major Dominick Vitale of the 60th Air Mobility Wing upon receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service, dedication, and sacrifice during Operation Allies Refuge. He exemplifies the best of America, and his tireless efforts guarantee the safety of all those who call America home.

Last year, the servicemembers of the 60th Air Mobility Wing met a challenge of colossal scale when they played a pivotal role in completing the drawdown of forces from Afghanistan. This command was critical in the largest noncombatant evacuation operation in known history, Operation Allies Refuge, ultimately saving over 124,000 lives. The 60th Air Mobility Wing directly supported the evacuation of nearly 13,000 Afghans while simultaneously managing the security and operations at Hamid Karzai International Airport. I have listened to countless stories from this group of brave men and women that exemplify the character, leadership, and bravery that is cultivated at Travis Air Force Base.

Service records only scratch the surface of the courageous actions performed by the 60th Air Mobility Wing. They put their hearts and lives on the line to save so many. These valiant servicemembers like Major Dominick Vitale epitomize the values of courage and patriotism.

On behalf of a grateful country and all the constituents of California's Third Congressional District, I would like to congratulate Major Dominick Vitale of the 60th Air Mobility Wing for receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross and extend my sincere gratitude for his sacrifice and contributions to the defense of this great country.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR.
THOMAS KAYSER

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2022

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of Mr. Thomas Kayser, of Saint Paul, Minnesota, who passed away on November 15, 2022.

Tom was a proud veteran of the United States Air Force. After graduating from Lawrence University, he served on active duty for eight years and as a reserve officer for 16 years, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He met his wife, Marlene Kayser, on a blind date, they married in 1959 and had three children, Carol, Tom and David. In 1966 they moved to Saint Paul when Tom joined the law firm, Robins, Davis and Lyons, where he worked for over 50 years and went on to become the managing partner. During his time at the law firm, which eventually became Robins, Kaplan, Miller, and Ciresi, he often served as a volunteer attorney, including for the Minnesota ACLU, and received many honors, in-

cluding being named Volunteer of the Year by the Volunteer Lawyers Network in 2007.

Tom and his wife, Marlene, who passed away in 2018, were both dedicated activists and volunteers in the community, supporting organizations like Planned Parenthood and the Advocates for Human Rights. They were also founding donors of Admission Possible, now known as College Possible, which is a national organization working to increase access to higher education for low-income students. At the Kayser family home the door was always open to generously give back to their neighbors. They were known for hosting fundraising events in their home and even in their backyard for nonprofit organizations, candidates and elected officials ranging from United States presidents to school board members. Tom and Marlene served as a host family to many international students and connected countless community leaders, and Tom also served as a board member and advisor for the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy, and as an appointed representative on the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission, where he also served as vice chair and committee chair.

It was an honor to call Tom a friend and neighbor for many years. My deepest condolences are with his beloved family and many friends. Madam Speaker, please join me in tribute to Thomas Kayser for his remarkable life of service to our nation and our community.

RECOGNIZING MRS. SONIA PÉREZ,
PRESIDENT, UPON HER RETIRE-
MENT AND 43 YEARS OF SERV-
ICE AT AT&T—SOUTHEAST
STATES

HON. TROY A. CARTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 8, 2022

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Sonia Pérez as she prepares to retire after 43 successful years of service. Throughout her long career, she ultimately was responsible for leading and executing the overall strategic direction of AT&T's corporate initiatives throughout Louisiana and Kentucky. Her teams engage the collective governmental ecosystem at the state, local, and federal level to build technology infrastructure that solves economic challenges faced by urban and rural communities.

Based in Baton Rouge, Sonia has led on strategy, governance and social responsibility issues within the private sector and the nonprofit organizations she has chaired since she moved to Louisiana as the AT&T state president in 2010, and previously in Texas. Outside of her work AT&T Sonia serves as an Independent Director for Hancock Whitney Corporation (NASDAQ: HWC), and on the executive committees of The University of Texas Foundation, the Louisiana Board of Regents, and The National WWII Museum.

Sonia remains engaged with her alma mater, The University of Texas at Austin, and was selected as a 2017 Distinguished Alumnus; having also previously received the Outstanding Young Texas Ex Award. In 2006, she was the first Latina elected president of the Texas Exes, the university's alumni associa-

tion. Among her proudest distinctions is a 1996 presidential appointment by President Bill Clinton to the Advisory Council of the Border Environment Cooperation Commission, a binational organization supporting the sustainable development of environmental infrastructure on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border. She was also recognized in 2006 with the El Abre Caminos Award from the Texas Mexican American Legislative Caucus.

She has chaired various boards including the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, the state's business roundtable known as the Committee of 100, and the Board of Trustees of my Alma Mater, Xavier University of Louisiana. She also led Governor John Bel Edwards' Economic Development Transition Team and is a member of the governor's Resilient Louisiana Commission. In 2018, Sonia was named to the Merit Selection Panel for the United States District Court Eastern District of Louisiana. She has also served on the national board of the Public Broadcasting Service, PBS.

Prior to being named the first woman president of AT&T Louisiana in 2010, Sonia worked in various capacities in Houston and South Texas, including as a vice president of AT&T Texas, where she was responsible for the company's initiatives throughout the Houston region. During that time, she was named the Houston Hispanic Chamber's Female Senior Executive of the Year, and served on the Houston board of J.P. Morgan Chase, and the executive committees of the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Houston Partnership. She was also a member of the Memorial Hermann Hospital System Board of Directors.

Sonia has received numerous awards and distinctions including Top 100 Most Influential Latinas in 2020 by Latino Leaders Magazine, LatinaStyle Magazine 2014 Corporate Executives of the Year, 2013 Inspiración Award from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Louisiana, 2015 Weiss Award from the New Orleans Council for Community and Justice, 2015 Role Model from the Young Leadership Council of New Orleans.

On a more personal note, Ms. Perez was someone I truly appreciated working with across New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and her leadership will truly be missed. Congratulations to Sonia as she enjoys the best days of her life in retirement.

DACA

SPEECH OF

HON. NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGÁN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here today, to help highlight the incredible contributions that DACA recipients have made to our country and my district.

There are over 800,000 DACA recipients across the country, and over 200,000 of them live in California.

Today, I want to highlight a very special DREAMER in my district.

A young lady named Mayra Garibo from Wilmington, California.

Mayra's mother brought her and her little brother to the U.S. from Mexico when she was just 7 years old.